

Progress on Gov. Heineman's Child Welfare Directives

August 21, 2006

Following is a summary of HHSS actions, as of July 31:

- Originally identified children: 1,184
- Cases Reviewed: 1,093
- Cases Closed: 209
- Number of cases removed from review: 69
- Number of additional cases reviewed: 517

Directive 1: Place a priority on resolution of the cases of children between the ages of 0 through 5

- Originally identified children, ages 0 through 5, in out-of-home care for 15 of the last 22 months: 566
- Cases Reviewed: 545
- Cases Closed: 43
- Originally identified children, ages 0 through 5, who have never been removed from their homes: 44
- Cases Reviewed: N/A
- Cases Closed: N/A
- Originally identified children, ages 0 through 5, who have been returned to a parent for six or more months: 107
- Cases Reviewed: 104
- Cases Closed: 37

Directive 2: Place a priority on achieving permanent placements for children who have spent 15 or more of the last 22 months in state care

- Originally identified children, all ages: 2,350
- Originally identified children, 0 through 5: 566
- Cases Reviewed: 545
- Cases Closed: 43

Directive 3: Prioritize Resolution of approximately 600 cases of children either never removed from home or safely living at home for six or more months

- Originally identified children, all ages: 618
- Cases Reviewed: 548
- Cases Closed: 166
- Originally identified children, all ages, who have never been removed from home yet remain in child welfare system: 193
- Cases Reviewed: 189
- Cases Closed: 41
- Originally identified children, all ages, who have been safely returned home yet remain in child welfare system: 425
- Cases Reviewed: 359
- Cases Closed: 125

Directive 4: Decrease the number of truancy cases. In 2005, HHSS caseworkers handled more than 750 related cases

- Meetings and discussions have taken place between HHSS and the Nebraska Department of Education regarding data sharing and next steps

Directive 5: Cross-training caseworkers to review and decrease caseloads

- HHSS Human Resources has identified previous child welfare workers, and the agency is prepared to activate those employees for temporary reassignment.

Directive 6: Build relationships with courts, county attorneys, law enforcement agencies

- Joint training sessions conducted; more than 300 meetings held to identify and resolve system-wide issues (investigations, termination of parental rights).